



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

February 23, 2021

Testimony of Secretary Melissa McCaw, Office of Policy and Management

In Support of **House Bill 6445 An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity In Occupations Licensed By The Department Of Consumer Protection.**

Chairs Maroney & D'Agostino, Vice Chairs Fonfara & Gibson, Ranking Members Witkos & Rutigliano, and honorable members of the General Law Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **House Bill 6445 An Act Expanding Economic Opportunity In Occupations Licensed By The Department Of Consumer Protection.**

As the Vice Chair of the Governor's Council on Women and Girls, I am proud to support this legislation. The Council is focused on championing policies that will ensure women and girls across Connecticut have economic opportunities, access to quality education and healthcare, and grow as leaders in both the private and public sectors. The purpose of the Council's Economic Opportunity and Workforce Equity Subcommittee is to *identify financial barriers that disproportionately hinder women and girls, including (but not limited to) pay and work environment disparities that inhibit fair performance evaluation and advancement in the workplace.* As Connecticut continues to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that we remove barriers to workforce entry. This legislation would expand and expedite access to licensed occupations for current and incoming residents.

I would like to highlight my support of Section 1 of the bill, which would ensure a smoother process for military spouses when they seek Connecticut's recognition of a professional certification and/or license obtained elsewhere. Over 90% of military spouses are women and they often move between states with their partners due to new military assignments. If obstacles in recognizing out-of-state licenses and certification are removed, these women can enter our state's workforce faster and obtain gainful employment shortly after their arrival. Additionally, this policy keeps military families together in their move to Connecticut. The brave men and women of our military and their families deserve our support of this proposal.

I appreciate the opportunity to share my position and am available should you have any further questions. The Council looks forward to working with the Committee to advance this critical piece of legislation.